DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 369 945 CE 066 388

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TITLE Project FORWARD: A Curriculum for JOBS Clients. A Leap Forward for JOBS Clients and Their Instructors.
PUB DATE Nov 93
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (Dallas, TX, November 1993).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Adult Students; *Classroom Techniques; *Employment Potential; *Job Skills; Journal Writing; *Literacy Education; Mathematics Instruction; Portfolios (Background Materials); Reading Instruction; Reading Strategies; Self Esteem; Student Journals; Student Motivation; *Teaching Methods; Whole Language Approach; Writing Instruction; Writing Processes; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Program

ABSTRACT

This paper describes Project FORWARD, funded by the Texas Education Agency to develop a life skills curriculum for JOBS (Job Opportunities and Basic Skills) participants. The Project FORWARD curriculum is designed to promote individual self-worth and independence so that participants can achieve self-sufficiency and eliminate dependency on welfare. The 100 lessons stress the importance of developing academic skills and real-world competencies that will give learners access to further education and training opportunities and high performance in the workplace. This teaching guide provide teachers with background information about adult learners and teaching techniques to help them. The 12 sections of the guide provide information on the following: (1) techniques for increasing student motivation; (2) techniques for increasing self-esteem; (3) meaningful learning; (4) assessment; (5) portfolios; (6) techniques for guiding meaningful learning; (7) a five-step whole language model for teaching; (8) journals; (9) personal dictionary; (10) metacognitive reading techniques; (11) techniques for teaching writing; and (12) techniques for teaching mathematics. (KC)

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PROJECT FORWARD
A CURRICULUM FOR JOBS PARTICIPANTS

1993 AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION (AAACE)

SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION WITH CURRICULUM GUIDE

NOVEMBER 22-23, 1993
DALLAS, TEXAS

A LEAP FORWARD FOR JOBS CLIENTS AND THEIR INSTRUCTORS

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OVERVIEW OF PROJECT FORWARD

Project **FORWARD** is a special project funded by the Texas Education Agency designed to develop a life skills curriculum for JOBS (Job Opportunities and Basic Skills) participants. This project is being conducted by the El Paso Community College Literacy Education Action program in conjunction with the adult education providers throughout the state of Texas. Project **FORWARD'S** objectives are:

1. To develop a replicable, life planning integrated basic skills curriculum for instruction in basic literacy levels through preparation for GED.

2. To incorporate into the curriculum a criterion referenced system of assessing progress in acquiring academic and life skills.

3. To develop a teacher training program in order to effectively implement the curriculum.

4. To disseminate an instructional guide that contains strategies for use with adult basic, secondary, and limited English Proficient populations.

The Project **FORWARD** curriculum is designed to promote individual self-worth and independence so that participants can achieve self-sufficiency and eradicate dependency on welfare. The 100 lessons stress the importance of developing academic skills and real world competencies that will allow the learners access to further education and training opportunities and high performance in the work place. Ten instructional units are developed in the following areas:.

PERSONAL DISCOVERY	FAMILY AND CHILD CARE	CULTURE	COMMUNITY
MONEY MATTERS	SCHOOL AND EDUCATION	CAREER	EMPOWERMENT
COMMUNICATION	HEALTH AND NUTRITION		

The structure of the curriculum accommodates the 20 hour per week requirement of the education portion of the JOBS programs plus it allows for the flexibility needed for serving

this diverse population. Classes are organized so that participants learn in group and individualized instructional settings. Reading and writing assignments emphasize "real life" and job-related tasks and address issues and concerns from students' work lives, home lives, and communities. Specific learner objectives include:

- ***to develop reading, writing, numeracy, and problem solving abilities***
- ***to develop independent learning strategies***
- ***to develop oral communication skills***
- ***to develop self-esteem and self-confidence***
- ***to develop personal, educational, and career goal goals and strategies for accomplishing them***
- ***to develop critical decision-making strategies***
- ***to develop life skills awareness***

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TECHNIQUES FOR INCREASING STUDENT MOTIVATION

Teachers are challenged with implementing instructional strategies that will encourage all of their students to be motivated to be active, independent, and "achievement-oriented" despite adverse economic conditions and personal histories. Helping students understand that performance is related to effort, which can be increased or decreased at will, and that they have control over their attitudes, behavior, and patterns of activities and practices are the basis for increasing student achievement-oriented motivation in the classroom.

A useful model for teachers concerned with promoting achievement motivation is[1]:

$$\text{MOTIVATION} = \frac{\text{expected reward}}{\text{expected effort}}$$

According to this ratio, motivation can be increased by increasing the expected reward *or* by decreasing the expected effort. The greatest amount of motivation would result from doing both of these things. Sample procedures for increasing motivation could include:

INCREASING EXPECTED REWARD

* Provide regular praise
* Provide interesting activities
* Write fair tests
* Provide high-success tasks
* Involve students in purpose setting
* Involve students in questioning
* Use meaningful reading tasks

DECREASING EXPECTED EFFORT

* Provide background information
* Give specific purpose
* Preview assignments
* Preview vocabulary
* Discuss reading strategies and skills
* Use high-success materials
* Divide large assignments into manageable shorter assignments

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[1] Adapted from Teaching Reading Comprehension Processes by Judith Westphal Irwin. Prentice Hall, Inc., 1986.

Other suggestions for increasing motivation include:

1) **Reduce competition in the classroom.**
Avoid establishing a competitive environment which interferes with learning through the arousal of undue anxiety. Many students fear competitive situations. A competitive climate is probably the one classroom factor that provides the greatest threat to student motivation and self-esteem. Some competition is desirable but determine if a competitive or a cooperative environment will best meet the students' needs.

2) **Provide students with knowledge of their progress.**
Schedule regular teacher-student conferences to help students set realistic learning goals and become self-directed in their behavior. Reinforce students' efforts and get them interested in and committed to working toward the next goal. During the conference use a variety of techniques, such as:

- modeling desired behaviors and attitudes
- giving feedback regarding students' progress
- correcting problems
- reinforcing students' efforts and progress

3) **Encourage realistic goal setting**
Help students gain a realistic view of their strengths and weaknesses and then assist them with developing individual educational plans to accomplish specific goals. Offer praise for specific accomplishments.

4) **Relate effort to success**
Model how success is attributed to effort by describing personal experiences in which people accomplished tasks by trying hard to succeed. Read stories and biographies describing individuals who have accomplished goals through effort and discuss individually or in groups the reasons why people succeed or fail. Discuss how attitudes, interests and efforts are related to succeeding.

5) **Encourage peer support**
Allow students to help one another by encouraging them to work on projects together or help each other with lessons. Create situations where uninvolved members can gain recognition from the group. Make sure contributions are recognized and valued.

6) **Increase students' involvement in learning**
Give opportunities for class members to select activities, assignments, due dates, class rules, methods, and pace of learning. Help them relate the curriculum material to their own experiences and problems. Encourage each student to contribute to group discussions or assignments. Set up the classroom environment so that students direct their own learning and the teacher acts as facilitator.

7) **Reduce anxiety in "achievement" situations**
Allow sufficient time to complete assignments, tests, and other work so students will not worry about them. Use activities that are not evaluated or graded. Teach strategies for effective study and test taking and allow opportunities for students to take practice tests. Communicate expected student behaviors and keep classroom rules short and simple. Actively listen to student concerns.

TECHNIQUES FOR INCREASING SELF-ESTEEM

Self-concept can be defined as a **set of perceptions, beliefs and attitudes that people have about themselves**. Self-concepts are learned through interpersonal encounters with significant others. This tenant, taken from the field of social psychology, has major implications for the student-teacher relationship and the learning environment because there is a direct relationship between a student's self-concept, manifest behavior, perception, and academic performance. As teachers, we must be concerned with the educational implications of self-concept because of its impact on every student in our classroom. In a sense, we can be a positive, negative or neutral influence on our students' self-concepts because **self-concepts are not unalterably fixed and rigid**, but flexible and modified by life experiences. Thus, teachers can provide opportunities for students to feel better about themselves and enhance their academic performance in the classroom.

Self-concept is important in an academic setting because **if students feel that they cannot learn something they will not**. Experienced teachers can cite many examples in which students' perception of their abilities severely restrict their achievement, even though their true abilities may be superior to those which they demonstrate. These perceptions of their "inability to learn" often become self-fulfilling prophecies because students avoid experiences which might alter their views of their ability to learn, thus perpetuating the idea that they cannot learn.

By recognizing the importance of self-concept, teachers can adopt a teaching style and create a learning environment which can promote the development of healthy self-concepts in students. There is not one blueprint or set of activities which can accomplish this purpose. It is accomplished through a teaching approach which looks for opportunities to provide encouragement, successful experiences and challenges to the students.

There are several ways teachers can help students feel successful and good about themselves and help them develop greater confidence in their ability to learn.

- Begin by accepting and liking them just as they are: shy, inattentive, aggressive, angry or whatever. Look behind behavior to the scared, uncertain, or anxious person. Let them know that you are "on their side".

- Let your students know that they can express their personal feelings, attitudes, ideas, concerns, and doubts without fear of criticism or embarrassment. This can be done by example by expressing some of your own feelings and fears openly and casually. It is important to be a "genuine" person in the classroom.

- Show students that you believe it is good and desirable to be unique and different, and to think in their own ways. Encourage students to explore their own thoughts and express them.

- Make your classroom a world of positive people, things and events. Smile when you see them. Call them by name. Listen to them when they talk. Let them know that you missed them when they were absent. Display their work.

- When students make mistakes, correct them quietly. When they have successes, praise them with a pat on the shoulder, a smile, or a public comment.

- Recognize students' progress. When we realize what it means to us to receive recognition (raise, better job, pat on the back), we should be able to appreciate what it means to people who have known little appreciation.

- Find areas where every student can feel successful and give each student a chance to succeed in at least one small way every day.

- Great care should be taken to never embarrass or discourage students.

- Look to students for advice and employ their skills and knowledge whenever possible. Recognize each student's special talents. Give them opportunities to share their "know-how" with others.

- When commenting on student work or behavior make a feedback "sandwich" . Begin with positive comments, then add a layer of suggestions for future improvement, and then conclude with positive comments.

- Avoid a competitive "who's best?" atmosphere in your classroom. Allow students to set their own pace and thus compete with themselves rather than with others.

- Encourage students to talk positively about themselves. Reward written or spoken statements which reflect their confidence in their abilities, achievements, and self-worth.

- Help students see that they have options for the future. Help them set realistic goals and develop concrete steps to accomplishing them. Help them visualize their future.

- Encourage students to take more risks by trying things they have never done before. Remind them that failure at a task does not mean failure as a person. Praise efforts of "risk taking".

- Establish a classroom environment where mistakes are perceived as a part of learning. Teach them to profit from their mistakes by using the information they have gained to indicate new directions for further learning.

- Be pleased with good attempts and give credit for students having tried. Focus on the process rather than on the final product.

- Provide classroom opportunities for students to find acceptance by their classmates. Make sure that students feel they are members of the class and feel they belong in the group.

- Encourage students to praise others. Model this behavior by praising achievements and encouraging students to praise each others' schoolwork and behaviors.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING

The principles of learning have many implications for both learners and teachers. Traditionally, learning has been defined as **a change in behavior, more or less permanent in nature, which is the result of experience.** This definition is often expanded to include cognitive changes, or changes in how the learner views an aspect of the world, as well as behavioral changes.

Learning has taken place when students:

- **Know** more than they knew before
- **Understand** what they have not understood before
- **Develop** a skill that was not developed before
- **Feel** differently about a subject than they did before
- **Appreciate** a subject that they have not appreciated before

Learning is not difficult. It does not require deliberate motivation. Most of the time we learn without knowing we are learning. It is an odd educational idea that learning is sporadic, difficult, effortful, requiring special motivation, incentives, and rewards. It is an odd educational idea based on meaningless learning.

Learning is so natural that we are uncomfortable and restless any time that we are unable to do it. The moment we find ourselves in a situation where we are learning nothing, we are bored (including situations where we are trying to learn.) Boredom means that we understand so much about what is going on, or understand so little of it, that there is nothing to learn. And boredom is aversive. We don't have to be taught to avoid it.

LEARNING IS EASY WHEN:	it is part of a flow of events in which we are involved
	we can make sense of what we are doing
	the brain is in charge of its own affairs
	it is not a particular focus of attention
	we are engaged in an activity that is interesting and meaningful to us
	our past is relevant
	external control is relaxed and individuals are permitted to take control of their own learning.
LEARNING IS DIFFICULT WHEN:	it is a deliberate intention
	oriented to some future goal rather than to present interest
	someone else decides what we should learn and how the learning will take place

Learning theorists suggest that learning is acquired more rapidly and retained longer when it has **meaningfulness, structure, and interrelatedness.** Too often students are overwhelmed with unrelated or isolated facts or skills which do not seem to have any relationship to any of their important goals or problems. It is little wonder that forgetting takes place on a vast scale because meaningless learning is followed by forgetting. It is the most inefficient way to learn.

Teaching must take cognizance of the basic principles of learning if it is to produce permanent and useable learning. Learning involves three basic processes:

1) **selective perception and attention**

We must be paying attention to something in order to learn it. Several environmental events are usually occurring simultaneously, so for anything to be learned, it must enter into the awareness of the learner.

2) **transformation and storage of selected information**

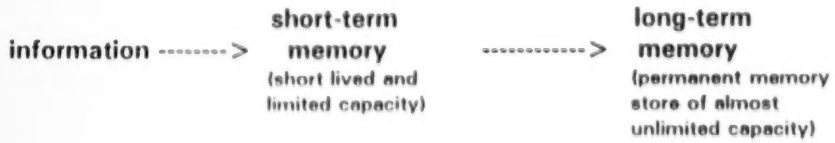
We cannot possibly retain all of the information we are bombarded with, so we sift, sort, categorize, and "file away" the information that is useful to us. This process usually involves some form of "mental rehearsal" where we keep information by repeating or rehearsing it to ourselves.

3) **retrieval of information**

Whenever we want to use the information we have stored away, we must access it according to how we "filed" it. The more we understand the information, the more files we have for it which allows us to generalize, transfer, and apply the information in a variety of settings.

The instructional process presents students with large amounts of information to be learned. The material is far too much to be memorized. **It must be learned in a meaningful way if it is to be remembered for any length of time. Unless students retain what they have been taught and can transfer their knowledge to new situations in the classroom and real life, learning has not really occurred.** Therefore, it is important that teachers understand how memory works and how it can be improved.

The following diagram is a simple model of the memory process to demonstrate why meaningful learning is so important.



ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of gathering data for decision-makers on how well an individual(s) can perform a task(s).

The purposes for assessment in adult education include:

PLACEMENT

- To identify a student's level of competence.
- To place a student in the appropriate level of program.

DIAGNOSIS

- To indicate in detail what the student needs to learn.
- To plan a lesson or curriculum.
- To identify learner attitudes.

PROGRESS

- To show evidence of student progress within a level or from one level to another.
- To identify students who are prepared to progress to a higher level or attempt a specific task or test.

DOCUMENTATION

- To justify continuation of a program.
- To show evidence of student performance.

There are numerous formal and informal assessment options available to adult educators therefore, it is important when making assessment decisions to consider:

- ***What is the purpose of assessment?***
- ***Who is interested in the results?***
- ***What are the goals of the instructional program?***
- ***What counts as success?***
- ***What changes need to be documented?***
- ***Who should be involved in the assessment?***
- ***When should assessment be done?***
- ***How should the assessment data be collected?***

Upon answering these questions, it becomes apparent that it would be difficult for one assessment instrument to satisfy all of these purposes and functions. Multiple assessments are needed in order to gather data on learners' proficiency, progress, and performance. Assessment, then became a **"package"** that includes teacher observations, student self-evaluations, and formal and informal analysis.

Assessment in a whole language classroom needs to be **on-going** in order to help both learners and teachers realize progress and future directions. This must include looking at learners over a period of time and determining **changes in performance, process, and perceptions** of the skill areas that are the focus of the lessons.

Both formal and informal assessments can be used to gather this information. It is a local decision to determine the appropriate on-going assessment materials to be used in an instructional program, however, the Project FORWARD curriculum strongly recommends the utilization of portfolios because they are authentic assessment instruments and are appropriate for use in a whole language curriculum.

Portfolios can be used for obtaining information on student performance and progress over a period of time. Portfolios are collections of student work, lists of readings, dated writing samples, or tasks completed that provide an overview of a student's development in writing, reading, computational skills, and self-expression. When used in combination with other instruments, portfolios provide comprehensive information on a student's mastery of skills, interests, strengths, abilities, needs, and potential. They should contain both:

> Process samples which are works-in-progress. They show how a student thinks, emphasizing the strategies and procedures used.
>
> Product samples which are finished, revised works. They show a student's strengths and achievements.

Three different types of portfolios can be utilized in the classroom:

> **The Working Portfolio** which tells the whole story of the adult learner. It has both process and product samples to show the learner's daily progress.
>
> **The Showcase Portfolio** which is modeled after an artist's portfolio - it shows the learner's best work. Process pieces are not usually included, just product samples.
>
> **The Record Keeping Portfolio** in which the teacher keeps necessary assessment and evaluation samples and records not chosen by the student for the showcase portfolio.

Materials included in portfolios should represent:

- aspects of student growth not captured by test scores.
- student growth and progress toward learning objectives.
- changes in students' reading, writing, computational, problem solving, speaking, listening, and thinking skills.
- changes in students' perceptions of themselves as learners.

Materials can include:

writing inventories
checklists
self-assessment sheets
surveys
reading logs
results from formal and informal tests
informal reading inventories
graphic representation of data
photographs of projects
mathematical autobiographies
solutions to word problems
mathematical problems made up by student
student produced directions to set up experiments
dated writing samples
notes from interviews
written summaries
story retellings
creative writing samples
writing webs
writing inventories
checklists
reports

Questions regarding the logistics of using portfolios in the class will need to be answered by both teachers and students, including:

* Where will they be stored?
* What information is essential?
* What information is optional?
* Who will have access to them?
* How often will information be added?
* Who can add information?
* What do they want to add to their portfolios from previous classes?
* Do they have a representative writing sample?
* How will they be evaluated?
* Who is responsible for putting a date on the samples?

WHAT'S IN A PORTFOLIO

Portfolios should reflect the progress that students are making and should be used for updating students' educational goals and plans. They are also useful for evaluating the effectiveness of lessons and the behavior changes that students might make as a result of participating in the program.

PERFORMANCE

READING

- reading profiles or checklists
- reading conference records
- story maps or frames*
- standardized reading assessments, i.e. (Woodcock, Moreno, Nelson-Denny, ABLE, TABE)
- informal reading inventories
- lists of books, magazines, articles, or other things read
- comments about the books read
- audiotapes of the student reading aloud
- miscue analysis
- descriptions of reading strategies the student controls
- recorded story retellings

WRITING

- dated narrative, expository, and creative writing samples, holistically scored
- writing profiles or checklists
- published writings
- writing conference records
- pre-writing sketches , webs, or semantic maps
- descriptions of writing strategies the student controls
- letter from the student to the reader of the portfolio, explaining each item

SPEAKING/LISTENING

- entry, mid-course, and exit tape recordings of student oral communication
- dictations
- interview conference records and updates, from both teacher and student

KNOWLEDGE

- pre-tests*
- end of unit evaluations*
- weekly self-evaluations*
- KWL worksheets*

MATHEMATICS

- written descriptions of mathematical investigations*
- description, sketch, chart, graph, or diagram used in the processes of solving a problem*
- responses to open-ended questions and homework problems*
- group reports*
- photographs of student projects
- video, audio, and computer-generated examples of student work
- solution to a problem assigned
- example of a problem made up by the student*

SCIENCE

- graphic representation of data*
- written predictions, procedures, conclusions, and summaries for experiments
- list of events and activities in sequential order*
- student produced directions to set up experiments

PROCESSES

- end of unit evaluations*
- learning styles questionnaires*
- student contracts*
- personal inventories*
- assessments of reading and writing practices
- questions, issues, brainstorming, or notes from problems or projects
- study skills inventories
- papers that show the student's correction of errors or misconceptions

PERCEPTIONS

- student surveys
- narrative student self-assessments*
- personal inventories*
- self-concept checklists*
- journal entries*
- autobiographical sketches*
- individual educational plans*
- individual career plans*
- end of unit evaluations*
- written reactions to classroom experiences*
- interview data about attitudes

* represents materials included in the Project FORWARD curriculum

* Information that is not potentially meaningful cannot be stored in long-term memory, therefore, **isolated facts, formulas, rules, or vocabulary are of little use to learners unless they can be related to something that is meaningful to them.**

* If the information that is temporarily stored in short-term :memory is not transferred into long-term memory, it is forgotten.

* Information can be stored in long-term memory only after it has been processed or rehearsed.

* Ideas and information that are already stored in long-term memory are the anchoring points for incoming information.

* Teaching specific facts or skills, without imparting the underlying principles that give structure to the subject, makes long-term retention and transfer extremely difficult.

* Access to information stored in long-term memory depends on the form in which the material has been stored. The greater the learner's understanding of the material, the greater the ability to transfer it and apply it in a variety of settings.

General procedures for teaching meaningful learning include:

1. ***EXPLICATION*** - explaining processes and strategies to students. Tell students about the skill and why it is important. Use specific examples. Use everyday language.

2. ***MODELING*** - show the students how you do the process being discussed. Give a concrete example of what you are explaining.

3. ***QUESTIONING*** - asking process and product questions in which students model processes back to you. This allows you to see if the students understand the skill and to what extent they can do it.

4. ***ACTIVITIES*** - providing meaningful experiences that require that the students use the processes.

TECHNIQUES TO GUIDE MEANINGFUL LEARNING

1) Take account of differences among individual learners. Students master the greatest amount of material with the most proficiency when they proceed at their own pace.

2) Learn to recognize when students are paying attention and channel and control the events to keep the learners focused on the lesson.

3) Keep the learner actively and appropriately engaged in the learning process. Vary the learning situation continually to keep the students involved.

4) Tell students what they will be learning before learning begins. This is an effective way to increase learning and retention.

5) Present a "manageable chunk" of information to students in a variety of ways and in a variety of contexts.

6) Stress the meaningfulness of the learning. Frequently ask the students to discuss ideas or skills they have learned in class and how they have been able to use them outside of class.

7) Emphasize the possibility of transfer of what is already known to the acquisition of new learning.

8) Ask different kinds of questions which require different types of thought processes from the students.

9) Allow students to design questions about what they are learning and ask other students in the class, or let them participate in designing tests for the class. The questioners tend to remember information this way.

10) Let the learners know how they are doing. Knowledge of progress seems to be essential for effective learning.

11) End each class with a summary of what was done and why. Ask students to summarize what they learned.

12) Help the students "learn how to learn", such as teaching Ellis' (1972) five interrelated techniques to improve study habits:
    a) Survey the material and get an overall idea of the author's direction.
    b) Focus attention on the task and eliminate irrelevant stimuli.
    c) Set a goal in advance and give yourself a reward after you have achieved it.
    d) Organize the material your own way so that it makes sense to you.
    e) Practice what you have learned by putting the material to use.

A FIVE-STEP WHOLE LANGUAGE MODEL FOR TEACHING

I. **INITIAL INQUIRY** - ***To introduce the topic***

- Teacher involves the class in a discussion regarding the specific topic or theme.
  - Get the conversation going
  - Get excited
  - Involve everyone
  - Help them realize what they already know

- Teacher models language behaviors such as questioning, expanding or reinforcing.
  - Explore relationships
  - Probe
  - Share
  - Make hypothesis

- Open-ended questions are vital and participants are encouraged to join regardless of limitations of knowledge.
  - Validate ideas
  - Listen and learn from each other
  - Help them realize they already know a lot

- During the discussion, vocabulary words can be identified, written on the chalkboard, discussed, used in context, and written into notebooks.

II. **LEARNING ACTIVITY** - ***To add information***

- Hands-on, concrete learning activity
  - Relate to ideas explored in Initial Inquiry

- Extends oral language
  - Keep talking
  - Continue to explore

- Facilitates connection between oral and written language.

- Increases student knowledge in subject area and in written or oral language.

III. **LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE** - ***To increase student competence and confidence in written and oral language skills***

- Students' own words or oral compositions are written down and used as material for instruction.
  - Get it down on paper
  - Put ideas into symbols
  - Edit
  - Share
  - Expand
  - Clarify

- Further develops comprehension of lesson's theme.

- Further develops learners' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
  - Communicate
  - Take risks
  - Create

IV. **READING IN CONTEXT** - ***To increase student competence and confidence in reading***

- Read what others have written about the topic.
  - Relate
  - Comment

- Directed reading-thinking activity.
  - Different interpretations are possible
  - Comprehension over decoding words

- Teacher models appropriate reading behaviors and strategies.
  - Predict
  - Visualize
  - Paraphrase
  - Describe
  - Interact with text
  - Share thoughts
  - Have fun

- Students apply strategies while engaged in reading.

- Students are encouraged to discuss, question, predict, interpret, summarize, and relate reading to own experiences or prior knowledge.

V. **HOME ACTIVITY** - ***To apply skills and information outside the classroom***

- Activities to do at home with families and children.
  - Explore ideas
  - Think
  - Relate
  - Incorporate
  - Expand

- Activities are extensions of class theme and skills.

- Activities are designed for more practice.

JOURNALS

"How do I know what I'm thinking until I see it on paper?"
Anonymous

Journal entries are incorporated into the Project FORWARD curriculum in order to help the students:

- express their thoughts, ideas, attitudes, beliefs, values, habits and strategies without fear of being right or wrong
- discover insights about themselves
- use writing to communicate what they know about a topic
- realize that they know a lot
- establish a visual record of their writing development
- collect their thoughts and prepare for the day's lesson or review the previous lesson
- let the teacher know of their needs

In journal writing the **student's message is the most important thing.** It is an opportunity for promoting communication between students and teacher. If possible, we recommend **dialogue journal writing** which is a student-teacher conversation. Usually entries are handwritten in a bound notebook in which students write about the day's topic or one of their own choosing. **The teacher accepts what is written and responds as directly and openly as possible.** It is an open exchange of ideas.

The teacher does not grade or correct the writing and does not respond with simple platitudes or evaluative comments such as "good" or "interesting point" but offers comments, observations, opinions and asks additional questions as in a "good conversation". The teacher may model some of the words and structures used incorrectly by the students, but the teacher responds to the content rather than the imperfections of the student's writing.

The goal of journal writing is to get students to become accustomed to expressing themselves in written language. It is an opportunity for them to develop the courage to take risks and write what they feel without fear of judgement.

Source: Peyton, J.K., and Reed L. Dialogue Journal Writing with Non-native English Speakers: A Handbook for Teachers, 1990.

PERSONAL DICTIONARY

Any procedure that encourages the learner to process the meaning of a concept deeply will contribute to meaningful learning. Being able to read words fluently and with understanding is dependent on a strong vocabulary. Helping students broaden their abilities to recognize and analyze words, and understand words and ideas are important instructional goals incorporated into the Project FORWARD curriculum. **It is recommended that word meaning instruction be related to students' background knowledge and connected to the topic and context in which the unfamiliar words appear.** It is important to encourage word learning as a life long pursuit and to teach varying strategies for developing word ownership.

Six useful strategies for vocabulary development are to:

1) ***learn words through context clues***
2) ***study definitions or words to be learned***
3) ***use the words in conversations and discussions***
4) ***learn a classification method for new words***
5) ***study synonyms***
6) ***paraphrase the definitions of new words by putting into own language***

To incorporate Personal Dictionaries into the FORWARD lessons, ask students to begin their personal dictionaries by writing down unfamiliar words, preferably in a small notebook which can be easily carried. Words will be added to this dictionary everyday. Encourage them to begin habits of:

- writing down unfamiliar words whenever they see them, particularly in class
- defining words by asking others or looking them up in a dictionary (discuss dictionary skills)
- underlining unfamiliar words as they read
- trying to guess what the word means by looking at the rest of the sentence or paragraph
- trying to "sound out" new words by saying the beginning sound and any parts of the word they know
- reviewing their personal dictionaries regularly
- closing their eyes and conceptualizing the new words
- using the new words whenever possible while talking or writing
- categorizing some of the new words, e.g. alphabetically, by meaning, by sound similarity, or by parts of speech
- generating their own definitions of the new words
- developing word games to play with other students

METACOGNITIVE READING TECHNIQUES

Good readers know when they have or have not understood something, and they know what to do when their comprehension breaks down. These are called metacognitive processes. They are the processes by which readers are consciously aware of and selectively apply various reading strategies. They include :

- *monitoring one's own comprehension for success or failure*
- *taking remedial action when necessary*
- *using study skills, such as*
  - *self-questioning*
  - *previewing*
  - *focusing attention*
  - *rehearsing*
  - *underlining*
  - *note-taking*
  - *reviewing*

It is very important for all students to develop their ability to monitor their own thought processes while reading in order to make sure they understand what they are reading. These techniques can be taught and/or strengthened so that the students are paying attention to whether or not they are understanding what they are reading. These three steps should be incorporated into every reading activity.

PRE-READING:

- Think about what they know about the subject
- Predict what the material will be about
- Know why they are reading the material

DURING READING:

- Give their full attention to the material
- Create mental pictures of what they read
- Stop and reread what is not clear
- Often stop to talk to themselves about what they read

POST READING:

- Ask what they have learned
- Think about how this fits into what they already knew
- Decide how they will use this information
- Ask if they have changed because of what they read

TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING WRITING

The most effective technique for teaching writing is to provide many opportunities to write in the classroom. However, "providing many opportunities to write" does not mean that writing is a **product** produced by the students in response to the teacher's assignment. It is a **process** that writers go through to communicate and produce a written product. The writing process encompasses everything from the initial thinking about the topic through the publication of the product. The fundamental steps that all writers go through include:

1) **Pre-writing** - generating ideas through activities such as group discussion, brainstorming or webbing[2]

2) **Drafting** - writing a first draft in sentence - paragraph form by developing the ideas and refining the thesis

3) **Revising** - evaluating and rewriting in order to make the communication clear, coherent and interesting by adding, deleting or rearranging the material

4) **Editing** - proofreading to ensure that the communication is error-free with appropriate language, punctuation, spelling and grammar usage

5) **Publishing** the final copy - producing a piece of writing that is complete and ready to share with others

The following are techniques that teachers can use with students to help with the writing process.

* **Talk** with the students about their writing. Help them clarify their messages and state explicitly what they are trying to say. Use questions such as:

  "So, are you saying that ...?"
  "This is your main point so far, what else would you like to say?"
  "Does this piece seem finished to you?"
  "What part of this piece do you like best?"

* Give **feedback** to the students by telling them of the words of images that stand out for you as a reader. Describe what you feel, think and experience as a reader and at what points in the text. Greet every trial or "approximation" the student attempts with encouragement and immediate, constructive feedback.

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[2] Webbing (clustering or mapping) begins with a nucleus word written in the middle of the page or board and then circled. The writer uses free association to write related words and ideas around the nucleus word. These words are then joined together "like a web" to the nucleus word.

- Give **suggestions** by using such statements as "If I were writing this I would _____ because I _____." It is important to respond to the message first and then target errors.

- Hold short, frequent **conferences** with each student. Try to limit the student's response and yours to one concern. Take one step at a time. If you do not know how to respond, draw more about the process out of the student or encourage the student to expand on the opinions stated in the text.

- Organize **peer conferencing** so that learners can work in pairs to share and discuss their work. Encourage them to help each other clarify ideas or expressions, add or delete information or correct grammatical and spelling errors.

- Teach **drafting techniques**, such as:

  - Leaving room on the paper for making additions and changes by writing on one side of paper, leaving wide margins or writing on every other line. Use scratch paper to save paper.

  - Not worrying about being perfect at the "drafting stage. Focus on getting the message on paper. Corrections in grammar, word choice and spelling can come later.

  - Crossing out without taking time to erase. Erasing wastes time and sometimes causes useful ideas to be lost forever.

- **Celebrate** closure by asking the students to read their finished products aloud to the class. Display student writings around the classroom or gather them into a book, newsletter or class anthology. Include the writing in the student's portfolio.

TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING MATHEMATICS

Mathematics needs to have a purpose. Most students who need remediation possess some grasp of quantitative relationships. Many students know how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. What they don't know is how to *apply* what they know to real life problems outside the classroom. Use the following guidelines to promote the use of mathematics in practical "real life" situations by helping your students:

1. **START WITH WHAT YOU UNDERSTAND.** List what the facts are.
   "What do I know?"

2. **FOCUS ON A GOAL.** Determine what the issue, problem, question, unknown, mystery is.
   "What do I want to find out?"

3. **PREDICT A REASONABLE ANSWER.**
   "What would the answer look like?"

4. **PLAN A SOLUTION.** Break up the information of the task into small steps. Determine which mathematical functions will need to be used.
   "How do I find out?"

5. **PERFORM THE PROCESSES.** Check steps as you proceed.
   "Does this answer look reasonable?"

6. **CHANGE STRATEGIES IF ONE DOESN'T WORK.** If you can't reach your goal from one starting point, begin again with another.

STRATEGIES

* **ACT IT OUT**
* **MAKE A TABLE, CHART, OR PICTURE**
* **FIND A PATTERN**
* **WORK BACKWARDS**
* **DO A LIKE PROBLEM**

Guiding principles for Instructors

* Communicate that most real problems **cannot be solved quickly** and many have more than one answer.

* Allow students to problem solve and compute **at their own rate.** Speed is seldom a factor in the real world and has little to do with mathematical power.

* Provide many opportunities for students to **write** about math. When students write about math in addition to compute, teachers learn more about the gaps in their knowledge and students have a chance to show more of what they do know.

* Ask students to **read** the problems aloud. Give them a chance to *hear* it as well as *see* it.

* Encourage the students to consult with each other. Structure problem solving activities in **small groups**. Ask them to reach consensus through conversation. Randomly call on group members to explain to the class the processes that were used to solve the problem(s).

* Ask the students to **review their own performance**, explain the reasons for choosing the processes they used, and identify the next step.

* Allow students to use **open books, notes, and calculators**. There is no reason to assess recall unless memorization is a high priority.

* Few remedial students learn math by being told it or being required to memorize the "facts of arithmetic". **Do not teach math as a storage and retrieval activity**. Use mathematical processes, such as computation, in the context of many kinds of problems rather than in isolation.

* Engage students in **real world** problem solving. Imaginary problems often require students to struggle more with revisualization and memory than with learning operational procedures.

* Help students **see behind the rules and rote techniques** to build a deeper understanding of mathematics.

* Involve students in **planning** and **assessing** their own learning. Help them identify their strengths and weaknesses and plan accordingly. Help students decide where they want to go, what they have to do to get there, and what the final results might be.

* Acknowledge more than one approach, or one right answer, and place more emphasis on **uncoached explanations** of the mathematical ideas involved and real student products.

* Use as many **aids** as are needed to solve problems. Provide tools such as manipulative materials, calculators, computers, assorted textbooks, and reference books.

* Avoid referring to numbers in an abstract, symbolic manner. Use **tangible referents**. Instead of saying "five and 16 equal 21", say "five apples and 16 apples make 21 apples."

* Intervene to complete problems when students are blocked. Do not leave students to struggle with problems they do not have the skills to solve. Discourage guessing aimed at merely giving an answer. Seize the "**teachable moments**" to teach number ideas and relationships and to help students use mathematics to make sense of complex situations.

* Look for students' **thinking** rather than small bits of knowledge. Try to get a picture of the student's thinking rather than whether the student can provide the "right" answer.